

KEITH, S., URBAN, E.K. & FRY, C.H. (EDS) 1992. *The birds of Africa*. vol 4. London: Academic Press.

Dr Thomas M. Butynski, Zoo AtlantalNational Museums of Kenya, Box 24434, Nairobi, Kenya

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Hamerkop *Scopus umbretta* on Kilimanjaro

I saw a Hamerkop *Scopus umbretta* at about 18:00 on 5 September 1993 at a muddy stream on the Shira Plateau of Kilimanjaro at an altitude of approximately 3600 m. I can trace no record of the species at a similar altitude; Cordeiro (1994) records it at 2100 m at Lendorosi on the western slope of the mountain and I have often seen Hamerkops at 2000 m on the northern slopes. My previous observations relate to a small bog derived from the overflow of a piped water source and both *Xenopus* and *Rana*, presumed prey items, were abundant. The muddy stream on the Shira Plateau also harboured a population of *Rana*.

Reference

CORDEIRO, N.J. 1994. Forest birds on Mt Kilimanjaro, Tanzania. *Scopus* 17: 65–112.

John M. Grimshaw, Kilimanjaro Elephant Project, c/o International School Moshi, Box 733, Moshi, Tanzania

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Lyre-tailed Honeyguide *Melichneutes robustus* and Grey Ground Thrush *Zoothera princei batesi*: new records for Uganda

The Semliki (Bwamba) Forest Reserve (0°52N, 30°05E) in western Uganda is separated by the 20-m wide Semliki River from the Ituri Forest of eastern Zaïre. Over 60 per cent of Uganda's forest bird species are found in the Semliki Reserve (Howard 1991) and several new birds for the country have recently been recorded from it (Ash *et al.* 1991). It contains a number of species whose status has given rise to concern, for example Nahan's Francolin *Francolinus nahani* and the Forest Ground Thrush *Zoothera oberlaenderi* (Collar *et al.* 1994). During field work in the Semliki in 1992, I recorded the following two species.

Lyre-tailed Honeyguide *Melichneutes robustus*

Britton (1980) included this species for Uganda, but in square brackets, noting "Although this species has not been positively recorded from Uganda, its unique and unmistakable call has been reported from Bwamba Forest where it can be expected to

occur." while Fry *et al.* (1988) include southern Uganda (Bwamba and Mabira) in the species' range, but with no supporting references. D.A. Turner informs me (pers. comm.) that there are no properly documented records of the species from Uganda. I was able to confirm the presence of the Lyre-tailed Honeyguide in the Semliki Forest Reserve: it was heard making its raucous noises over the canopy between 18:40 and 19:15 on 10 and 11 July 1992 and, on the second evening, it called in response to a taped play-back of the species' call from Chappuis (1985). Four forest guards and Otim Thomas were also present during the observations which took place at a path leading to the Kirima River in UTM square 8195.

Grey Ground Thrush *Zoothera princei batesi*

On 6 July 1992 a Grey Ground Thrush was watched for about 20 s hopping along a path leading to the Kirima River; it then perched on a nearby shrub where it stayed for about 3 min. On 8 July, two specimens of this species were collected from mixed evergreen forest (*Cynometra*-dominated) with dense undergrowth in UTM square 7594. Their identity was kindly confirmed by M. Louette. Mensural data were:

Specimen	body length	mass	wing	tail	tarsus	bill
1	190	67.5	110	73	33	19
2	192	65	112	74	33	18

This species, although mentioned by Britton (1980) in a discussion under the entry for Prigogine's Ground Thrush *T. kibalensis*, was omitted from the Uganda and East African avifaunas in error. Friedmann & Williams (1973) had already recorded the species for Uganda: their collectors secured two non-breeding specimens (24 June and 5 July) in Budongo Forest and noted that the 1963 Knudsen-Machris Expedition had also "reported" it from Budongo. They go on to say "At that time [1963] this [the Knudsen-Machris bird] was only the second record of this species from Uganda, the earlier one being from Bugoma." *T. princei batesi* has also been recorded as occurring east to the Ituri Forest (Prigogine 1978). It is interesting that both Britton (1980) and Ash *et al.* (1991) predicted that it would be found in Uganda.

The need for further detailed biological surveys on the status and distribution of birds in the forest cannot be overemphasized.

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*Christine Dranzoa, Makerere University Biological Field Station, Box 10066,
Kampala, Uganda*

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The Spur-winged Plover *Vanellus spinosus* in Tanzania

Britton (1980) considered this species to be only a wanderer to Tanzania, south to Morogoro and Rukwa. Urban *et al.* (1986) treated the Rukwa record as extralimital and Hayman *et al.* (1986) show *spinosus* to be a non-breeding visitor to northeastern Tanzania, clearly separated from its breeding range in Kenya. The record for Rukwa is presumably that of Vesey-FitzGerald & Beesley (1960) who listed it as rare but without further details. The reference to Morogoro Region has not yet been traced.

The earliest record I have located is that of Reichenow (1894) who mentioned this species for "Massailand and Victoria-Nyanza". Measurements for eggs are also given but it is not clear if these were from nests found in Tanzania. It is referred to by Fuggles-Couchman (1962) who considered it "Fairly widespread although rather local in Northern and Eastern Provinces either singly or in pairs." Schmidl (1982) gives a sight record for Seronera (Serengeti) of six birds in short grassland on 20 August 1972. An earlier record from Seronera for June 1962 was submitted by N.R. Fuggles-Couchman to the Tanzania atlas project.

In view of these records and its well known residence in the Rift Valley of Kenya (Jackson 1938), it is surprising that earlier authors (Elliott & Fuggles-Couchman (1948), Fuggles-Couchman & Elliott (1946), Morgan-Davies (1964), Thomas (1960) and Beesley (1972)) did not locate it in northern Tanzania during the 1940s to 1960s. Perhaps, being on the southern edge of its range, the population had contracted northwards. Lack *et al.*'s (1980) statement for Tsavo East National Park (Kenya) that it "may be a recent arrival as all WL's [Walther Leuthold's] records are after August 1972 except for 2 in 1971" could reflect a range expansion in the late 1960s.

The Tanzania atlas database now holds 39 more recent records of this species, including two successful breeding attempts. On 12 December 1991 on the eastern shore of Nyumba ya Mungu dam south of Moshi, a partially fledged juvenile with two adults was located among the short vegetation of the upper lake shore [SD]. There were other adults to the south of these birds but no more young were seen [NEB]. Previous records from this locality are for March 1986 [NEB].